

Edmonton

October 1996

NEXT MEETING:

Monthly Support Meeting:
Tuesday, October 15, 1996
10612 - 124 St
Suite 103
7:30pm

We welcome parents, family members and friends of lesbian, bisexual, gay and transgender persons - and, of course, LBGT people themselves!

The coffee will be on. Bring "nibbles" if you wish.

For further information please phone Lynne [REDACTED] or Ellen [REDACTED]

What is PFLAG?

Growing Together!

By the Rev. Kenneth G. Prunty,
Director, PFLAG National
Convention in Indianapolis,
Executive of The Church of
God, Anderson, Indiana,
Retired)

(A guest editorial courtesy
PFLAG Olympia, Washington)



What an opportunity we have through PFLAG. In each meeting we come to affirm each other, to be challenged, to explore, to learn, to grow. We can connect, network and build community.

In each chapter meeting we create safe and congenial settings for all members to meet together for creating friendships, building understanding, and equipping each other for support, education and advocacy.

CIRCULATION:110

We are part of an emerging global neighborhood, bursting through the boundaries of a closet that has kept us in the dark for too many eons. We are people connected, learning to love and accept, joining hands, lifting and encouraging, celebrating family and building bridges to equality.

We are wrapping our caring vision around each family, then around the community, and finally around the earth, that all families everywhere may love and accept each person as a lovable and capable person of worth, somebody very special.

Let's let our own light shine and give others the freedom to do the same. May we be liberated from our own personal fears so that all persons can be free. That's what PFLAG is all about.

THANKYOU I.S.C.W.R.

PFLAG Edmonton wishes to extend their thanks to the Imperial Sovereign Court of the Wild Rose for their very generous financial donation to our group.

For many years the ISCWR has raised funds, in the thousands of dollars, to support those groups who challenge the prejudice against, and misunderstanding of, people of same-sex sexual orientation and opposite-sex gender identity. Their continued support of these groups is a crucial element in the enlightenment of an ill-informed public.

Thanks again ,ISCWR. We wish you phenomal success in your future endeavors.

Annual General Meeting

PFLAG Edmonton

At our annual general meeting on October 1, 1996 the following people were elected to our Board of Directors:

- Cindy - Past President
- Terry - President

Speakers Bureau

Director

(Gisela, Joyce, Irving, Kate, Lynn, Bryan, Ellen, Bryson, Catherine)

- Lynne - Chair

- Public Relations

Director (Fred, Peter, Graham, Ellen)

- Irving - Irving
- Donna - Secretary
- Karen - Treasurer
- Jenny - Support Director
(Bryan, Kate, Donna)
- Ellen - Newsletter Editor

- Education Dir. (all other board members)

- Blanche - Program Dir.
(Support Meetings)

Directors at Large:

Bryan, Carroll, Dale, Ernie, Fred, Gisela, Joyce, Louise, Mona, Peter.

A big THANKYOU goes out to these people for undertaking these responsibilities. PFLAG Edmonton looks forward to a great future!

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world.

Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."

Margaret Mead

PFLAG Speakers Bureau

Katherine Weinmann, Co-ordinator of Counsellors for Edmonton Public Schools, invited PFLAG representatives to speak to their first (September) senior high school counsellors' monthly meeting about PFLAG parents' concerns for lesbian, bisexual, gay and transgender children.

About 10 counsellors were expected, one representative from each senior high school. Seventeen counsellors attended and gave our four speakers - Lynne, Kate, Ernie and Ellen - an empathetic and very concerned hearing. These people welcomed our literature kits,

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taking them back to share with their fellow counsellors.

As follow-up, PFLAG will be sending them the information requested on transgender as well as our monthly newsletter and new publications as they become available.

PFLAG EDUCATION

The Challenge PFLAG Parents Face

(The following is a condensed version of Chapter 9, *Being Homosexual*, by Richard A. Isay, M.D. 1990)

Western culture has firmly delimited masculine and feminine characteristics and roles. It places greater value on traditional male than on traditional female attributes. These value-laden dichotomous roles are rooted in the aggressively competitive nature of our social structure. Aggressive spirit and energy make good entrepreneurs, and society prizes these attributes more than loving, sensitivity, sentimentality, generosity, and caretaking, which are viewed as more feminine virtues. We prize individuality when it comes to the exercise of a man/s aggressive spirit, but are inclined to despise it in the exercise of those aspects of his nature that are not perceived as conventionally masculine.

The roots of homophobia, as we have seen, lie in the hatred of

where women are subjugated, feared, or discriminated against because men feel contaminated or polluted by them, "feminine" character traits in males will be despised. "In contrast, if men value women, then it is not considered bad if a male displays some character traits more like those of a woman. Androgyny is not suppressed, as it is in the hypermasculine societies, but valued".

Boys who have artistic sensibilities and interests, who may not be competitive or aggressive, who are sensitive and solicitous of the needs of others, who like "pretty" clothes and objects, are likely to be perceived as being more feminine than other boys. They may be turned from by their fathers in favor of male siblings, and are likely to be labeled "sissies." A few who for any number of reasons do not become sufficiently socialized and masculinized during their adolescence may grow into adults who epitomize to themselves and others the role that has been ascribed to them. Most often, gay men despise in themselves, not their homosexuality per se, but what they have been taught as children to perceive as being different, and what has been labeled first by others and then by themselves as being "feminine."

Society continues to be very reluctant to ensure that the dichotomous compartmentalization of roles, and the under valuation of

women, have not been translated into infraction on the civil liberties and rights of women.

Our society has been even more reluctant to change to one in which the same value is placed upon sensitivity, compassion, nurturing, and loving as on aggressivity, competition, and productivity. Such a basic change in our society might enable many boys who are different in these ways to grow up feeling more valued and valuable. It might enable heterosexual men to perceive that men who love other men may also be masculine.

If some of these (gay) children could be identified early enough, it might be possible to counsel parents and family so that rejection, injury to self-esteem, and negative self-images would be minimized or avoided altogether. Fathers of homosexual sons could, for example, be counseled not to withdraw but to nourish their sons' interests and to share common activities. When necessary and appropriate, mothers would be counseled to encourage these boys to spend more time with their fathers. If the child is made to feel that his same-sex object choice is a normal aspect of his development, he will grow up loving himself and others in spite of being "different" and in spite of the bigotry that surrounds him. He will expect that to be loved is the natural result of being a lovable and good person. These children, having learned to love and respect themselves as homosexuals, will have the self-

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esteem necessary to love and respect others. It is this nurturing assurance that begins in childhood with the love of the parents that forms the basis for a healthy self-esteem and for the assurance necessary to deal with social prejudice and injustice.

The Hetrick-Martin Institute in New York City was established to meet the needs of homosexual adolescents and their families. Its unusual approach shows early success in minimizing the harm done by the social, emotional, and cognitive isolation of homosexual adolescents and young adults. The center counsels and educates the parents and, if necessary, the adolescents themselves. It provides opportunities for the socialization of gay adolescents in an environment that is supportive and designed to counter negative images by providing appropriate role models and education. Similar programs throughout the country would assist gay adolescents who need help with developmental difficulties. Without the benefit of early intervention, most gay men will continue to be affected by the debilitating social prejudice that shapes the attitudes of parents, peers, and loved ones.

Our laws currently contribute to making stable relations between men difficult, and encourage transient, random sexual associations that can be hidden. Some states refuse to recognize the rights of individuals to private, consensual sexual

relations between adults. All states refuse to grant legal status to relationships between adult gay men and make it difficult for gay men in loving relationships to enhance these relationships by adopting children. Michel Foucault put it this way:

In Western Christian culture homosexuality was banished and therefore had to concentrate all its energy on the act of sex itself. Homosexuals were not allowed to elaborate a system of courtship because the cultural expression necessary for such an elaboration was denied them. The wink on the street, the split-second decision to get it on, the speed with which homosexual relations are consummated: all these are products of an interdiction.

Our society does not desire to see gay men in stable, responsible, mutually gratifying relationships. Such relationships are still too threatening to the sense of masculinity of men in most segments of Western culture. When the time comes that such relationships are fostered between gay men, to expend so much energy and time in hiding and disguising themselves and finding secret ways to express their love and sexuality, there will be a release of creative energy that will benefit all society.

It takes enormous effort for gay men to maintain their sense of dignity and self-worth in a society that remains inimical to them and their sexuality. It will take an even greater effort and conviction for our society to

encourage the self-worth and emotional health and well-being of gay men by sanctioning loving relations of all kinds.

GAY RIGHTS

Good News from Bryan-College Station

(Courtesy PFLAG Houston, August, 1996)

PFLAG Bryan-College Station is happy to announce that the members of Friends Congregational Church (UCC) voted on June 16th, 1996 to become "Open and Affirming". After a year-long process examining issues surrounding the acceptance of gay persons in the church, Friends Congregational Church adopted a statement that says, in part, "that in the Spirit of love and openness we welcome into this community of faith persons of every sexual orientation, race nationality, ability, age and gender to participate in all aspects of our church's life and ministry."

ON THE BOOKSHELF

Stranger at the Gate

Subtitled: To be Gay and Christian in America

by Mel White

(1994, Simon and Schuster)

In this book Mel White, a former ghostwriter for such noted figures on the religious right as Billy Graham and Jerry

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Faldwell, chronicles his own life in the church and his difficult struggle to finally come to terms with his own homosexuality. With a touching foreword by Lyla White, Mels former wife of 20 years, this book is an excellent read for anyone who has questions about being Christian and homosexual.

It is a deeply moving story of suffering and triumph as well as a frank expose of the anti-homosexual tactics of the religious right.

Anyone who has ever suggested that homosexuality for the Christian is merely a weakness of will or a deficiency in prayer would think twice after reading Mel White's story. He speaks to this issue with heartfelt sincerity and truth.

We have one copy of "Stranger at the Gate" in our PFLAG library. If you wish to borrow it, please see Kate at our next support meeting.

WORKSHOPS

Series I:

Being Gay in the 90's

Wed Oct 24 thru Wed Dec 4

7 to 10 pm

Series II

Coming Out in the 90's

Thurs Oct 24 thru Nov 28

7 to 10 pm

These workshops will be held at St Stephens College, U of A campus, Autumn, 1996.

For further info: [REDACTED]

To register: [REDACTED]

EVENTS CALENDAR

Sexuality: Contemporary Issues

A comprehensive introduction to the study of human sexuality, hosted by Alexander McKay of the Sex Information and Education Council of Canada and Professor Margaret Schneider of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. This 12-part series was produced by CJRT-FM Open College in Toronto in support of SOSC 278: Human Sexuality, a course offered by Athabasca University.

Mondays at 8:00pm, starting Sept 16/96 on CKUA radio, 94.9FM.

Program Titles:

- Sept 16 - Historical and Scientific Perspectives on Human Sexuality
- Sept 23 - Sexual Diversity In and Across Cultures
- Sept 30 - The Development of Gender: Biological and Social Perspectives
- Oct. 7 - Sexual Orientation
- Oct 14 - Childhood Sexuality and Education
- Oct 21 - Adolescent Sexuality and Education
- Oct 28 - Adult Sexuality and Sexuality in Later Life

- Nov 4 - Sexuality and Disability
- Nov 11 - Sexual Dysfunctions and their Treatment
- Nov 18 - Sex and Abuses of Power
- Nov 25 - How AIDS has Changed our Sexuality
- Dec 2 - Sexually Explicit Media

If you listen to the October 7 talk we recommend you contact CKUA and let them know what you think. Their e-mail address is ckua@oanet.com

Edmonton Vocal Minority

REGARDS TO BROADWAY

Saturday, November 16, '96

8:00 pm

Convocation Hall

University of Alberta

Ah, BROADWAY... one of America's proudest traditions (at least until we got hold of it). Join Edmonton Vocal Minority as we take a riotous journey through Broadway - old and new. It's guaranteed to bring back a few memories and keep you laughing as we give our regards to Broadway.

- Having started with twelve singers in 1992, the chorus has grown to become the 5th largest lesbigay mixed chorus in the world !!

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- Composers who have written for EVM include Gil Cote, Kirk Kryvenchuk and Richard Bink from Edmonton; John-Michael Albert, Texas, and Merek Royce Press from New York!!
- EVM has given benefit performances for Aids Network, McDougall United Church, Planned Parenthood Association and Ross Armstrong Fund. Guest appearances have included Global Visions Film Festival, Celebration of Women In The Arts Conference and International Assembly of Unitarian Universalists!!
- Honourary patrons have included Heather Bishop, Stephane Bemelin, Sherry McKibben, Michael Phair and Svend Robinson!!
- EVM is hosting a national chorus festival which will be held in Edmonton in May 1998. This festival will attract nearly 1,000 lesbigay singers from across Canada!!

Subscribe today: [REDACTED]

Castle Ball

presented by EVM

Saturday, Oct 26

8:00pm doors open

9:00pm live entertainment with singer Amy Levesque & Gil Cote

10:30pm DJ

Prince of Wales Armouries

10440 - 108 Ave

A LesBiGay Halloween
Masquerade Party

Everyone Welcome

Tickets: \$15 before Oct 21; \$20
after Oct 21 @ Orlando Books
and The Front Page

ANGELS IN AMERICA**Part I: Millenium Approaches****October 12 - November 3**

This brilliant Tony Award winning play is surprisingly funny. It is at once intimate and epic, following two couples - one gay, one straight - who are hurling apart and crossing paths in the midst of the millennial angst of the nasty, self-aborted 80's. An apocalyptic fervour permeates their relationships, echoing the spiritual decay of American life in the face of a deadly new plague.

Tickets: 434-4015

Part II: Perestroika**October 26 - November 17**

Prior Walter is sick, alone and an unwilling prophet of a divine emanation. His friends and acquaintances are woven together and ripped apart as politics, AIDS, sexuality, family and the state of heaven all impose their conflicting wills on this feisty group. Grappling with concepts of love and loss in the face of overwhelming suffering,

this is a radical rethinking of the american political drama - and playwright Kushner does it brilliantly with great pathos and considerable comedy.

Tickets: 425 - 1820

WEEKLY EVENTS**Gay Men's Wednesday Coffee
Evenings**

Breadstick Cafe

10159 - 82 Ave

from 7:30 on...

Phone Graham: [REDACTED]

**Pink Triangle Youth of
Edmonton**

Saturdays, 8 to 10 pm

#103

Lesbian Life Line:**OUTreach**

A social and political organization on the University of Alberta campus. Meets 5:00pm, Mondays at Athabasca Hall.

Phone: [REDACTED]

**LABYRINTH LAKE
LODGE**

For Personal and Group Retreats

Edmonton

45 min S.E. of Edmonton

160 Acres of Peace & Seclusion

Affordable, All Seasons

Fully Equipped

Call your hosts, Heather &
Kathy, at 878-3301 (toll free)

This gay and transgender positive Lodge overlooks secluded Labyrinth Lake on 160+ acres of private land and water.

Perfect for peaceful walks, skiing, canoeing, animal watching, campfires or group games, music and sports. Many other activities nearby.

The site is ideal for private or family retreats, small group events and workshops. Sleeps 12 comfortably.

P.S. Farm fresh eggs and garden vegetables in season!

Morningside**Bed & Breakfast**

"Your Home Away from Home"
with hosts Dick & Cindy Ryley

1645 Carmi Ave

Penticton, B.C.

Phone 604-492-5874

LATE FLASH!

Ten PFLAG Edmonton parents, family members and friends braved a cold wind to participate in the 7th annual AIDS walk, raising monies for AIDS research. Congratulations!

It's a Gay Life!

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"OUT" IN EDMONTON

Part I

I came out to a friend at work this summer. It was one of the hardest things I have ever done. We had been working side by side for a couple of years and our friendship and mutual respect had become legendary at our firm. But the lies about my private life and a fictitious out-of-town girlfriend became more and more complicated and marred a relationship that was based on honesty and trust.

After months of hinting to him about the possibility of so-called alternate lifestyles, and praying that he would ask me about my sexuality, I realized that if I didn't do something I would go crazy. I remember the day clearly. I hadn't gotten any sleep the night before and I couldn't concentrate on my job. I kept going over to him, trying to get the words out of my mouth. Finally, he looked up at me.

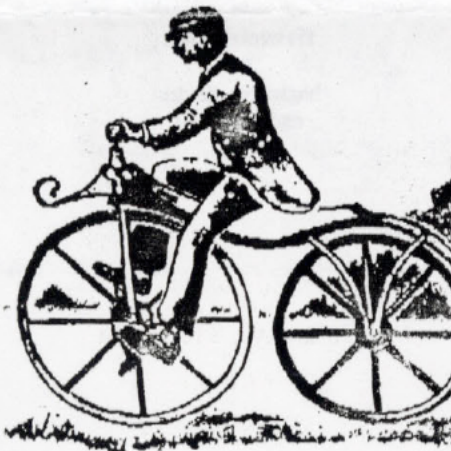
"Peter, what is it?"

"I have something on my mind and...I have to figure out how I'm going to tell you."....

"Is it personal?"

"Yeah, it's very personal."

I walked away. I had chickened out again. Why didn't he just



ask the question? The question I had spent years dreading someone might ask!

I looked around the room and saw that everyone had gone for lunch. This would probably be the only time the two of us would have some privacy. I had to tell him. It was Friday and I knew I wouldn't be able to last the weekend. I turned around and walked toward him. I was a juggernaut and my course and speed had been set. He had his back to me. I knew that what I was about to say could cost me

my friend and career and that once spoken my words could not be taken back. I stared at the floor and took a deep breath,

"I'm gay."

To me they were just sounds without meaning. That was the only way I was able to say it.

When I looked up he looked into my eyes, "Peter, it's okay and I promise I won't tell a soul."

We talked for a while and then I noticed that people were coming back from lunch. As I got up to go he put his hand on my shoulder,

"Hey, it's okay."

Since then we've continued to show our friendship through horseplay or the touch of a hand and neither one of us has ever flinched. I wish there were more people like him.

Peter Mark Whitaker

PFLAG Edmonton

An Outdoor & Recreation Group for Edmonton's Gays, Lesbians, Bisexuals and their friends

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Activities Phone Line:





Cross-Country Skiers



beginning
Sunday, 3 November 1996
(weather permitting)

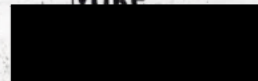
at
1:00 p.m.
in

Hawrelak Park
for
beginners, novice
and advanced
skiers

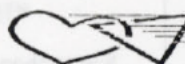


contact

Mike



for all the details



PFLAG / Edmonton
Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Individual Membership \$20 _____
Household Membership \$30 _____
Student/Limited Income \$15 _____
Newsletter Only \$15 _____
Donation \$ _____

Please make cheque payable to
PFLAG Edmonton and mail to:
Mrs. Karen Churchill
9 Coachman Way, Sherwood Park, AB.
T8H 1C5

PFLAG Edmonton is a non-profit and all volunteer support group not affiliated with any ethnic, political, or religious organization. Memberships are available to all. Any information collected remains strictly confidential. Meetings are held the third Tuesday of each month at 7:30 pm, GLCCE, Suite 103, 10612 - 124 Street (Lower Level).

Everyone Welcome!

Coffee will be served